



# National Fire Plan

## Managing the Impact of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment

### Economic Action Program

The National Fire Plan includes a strong emphasis on community wellbeing. It supports Community Assistance efforts aimed at identifying and capturing economic opportunities for fuel reduction that will protect communities in the high-risk wildland urban interface from future fire damage.

In FY2002 the National Fire Plan has over \$12 million for Economic Action Programs (EAP) to provide technical and financial assistance to develop and expand markets for traditionally underutilized wood products, and to expand the utilization of wood removed during hazardous fuels management activities. Approximately 150 - 200 local projects will be funded in FY 2002 to build community capacity to reduce hazardous fuels while providing economic diversification opportunities.

The Economic Assistance Program works directly with communities to identify and develop public and private technical support, expand economic opportunities and support rural communities to build skills, networks and strategies to address social, environmental and economic changes. Economic Action Programs serve as a catalyst, rather than the primary source of funds to assist with economic transition, responding to communities needs. FY 2001 saw a fourfold increase in the demands for Program requests from communities, tribal government and state agencies.

### Program Delivery and Outcomes

In FY 2002, support through the National Fire Plan will establish the following products and services:

Products will include:

- Finding new uses for underutilized species
- Wider use and application of small diameter material
- Use of round wood in construction
- Renewable energy sources for local businesses from biomass conversion
- Local use of wood for transportation structures

Services that address and support wildfire activities and strategies will include:

- Technical assistance to develop re-lending and revolving loan pools which expands the use of local capital for business
- Support and expansion of state utilization and marketing that increase local capacity and resiliency to economic and social change
- Support of regional and multi-state technical centers that can share and extend science and technology

- Entrepreneurial training that builds community capacity, supports family waged jobs
- Technical assistance to communities to incorporate defensible space principles and economic opportunities for biomass utilization into economic development plans